

August 2001

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1961-1990.

UK overview

The whole of the UK, had temperatures just above normal, with most areas receiving more rainfall and sunshine than normal. However, it was rather dull in parts of north and east Scotland, with less than average rainfall over the north-west of Scotland.

Temperatures in London approached 32 °C, exceeding the August bank holiday Saturday record of 31 °C set in 1943.

England and Wales diary of highlights

A near-normal month statistically. Hot days alternated with cooler unsettled conditions when hail and thunderstorms affected many places. Mostly wet in south-east England and East Anglia.

1st to 9th After a very warm start it became unsettled and cooler as low pressure passed just to the north or directly over the region. Associated fronts brought frequent outbreaks of thundery rain and hail especially to East Anglia and the Midlands on the 6th, northern areas on the 7th, and again to south-east England and East Anglia on the 9th. Many funnel clouds were seen on the 9th with one touching down at Gosport overturning some caravans, while a waterspout was sighted off the Suffolk coast. Northolt (north-west London) received 56 mm of rain in 12 hours and another gauge collected 71 mm at Worsham (Oxon).

10th to 14th Changeable with some occasional light rain and cool temperatures at first, however with drier conditions and good sunny periods it became very warm or hot over southern areas during the 13th and 14th.

15th to 19th After a hot start, (Wainfleet / Lincs reached 31.9 °C on the 15th) another unsettled period ensued with thundery outbreaks in many places, in particular south-east England and East Anglia on the 16th and on the 19th. Overnight 17th/18th the Isles of Scilly received 48 mm of rain.

20th to 23rd With pressure higher than of late, mostly dry, quiet conditions prevailed and with good sunny spells in most areas, temperatures rose into the warm category generally.

24th to 26th Light southerly winds brought hot humid conditions to most places on the 24th and 25th, when London approached 32 °C, exceeding the August bank holiday Saturday record of 31 °C set in 1943. However a weak cold front already astride western areas moved hesitantly eastwards producing thunderstorms later on the 25th and during the 26th, mostly over the Midlands, south-east England and East Anglia.

27th to 29th An anticyclonic interlude brought mainly sunny dry and warm weather to the bulk of the region.

30th to 31st As low pressure transferred to the south North Sea, NW winds brought cooler showery conditions, some of the showers were heavy and accompanied by hail and thunder.

Scotland diary of highlights

Uneventful and close to average.

The weather of August was fairly close to average, which meant that it was rather better than June or July. There were no heatwaves, with the highest temperature of the month a modest 22 °C. There was a longish wet spell from the 11th to the 15th, but the remainder of the month provided some reasonable summer weather.

Warm and humid southwest winds and fronts brought outbreaks of rain to Scotland on the first two days of the month. This was followed by a cool and showery westerly airflow for four days, with relatively few showers on the 3rd and 6th.

On the 7th and 8th a depression crossing Northern England brought some rain to the south of Scotland. North-westerly winds in the rear of the low brought a return of sunny periods and showers to the whole of Scotland on the 9th and 10th.

From the 11th to the 15th warm and humid air accompanied by slow moving fronts brought a period of dull weather with plenty of rain to many places. There were 42 mm at Dalmally on the 12th and 35 mm at Lanark the next day.

Brighter conditions spread from the west on the 16th and lasted until the 18th as the next weather system moved into Biscay. However, this low subsequently moved north, bringing a wet day to most places on the 19th, with Rackwick (Orkney) receiving 43 mm of rain.

After a fine day on the 20th, renewed cloud, rain and wind spread from the west on the 21st. A quieter spell of weather then followed for four days, with light winds, sunny periods, and just a few showers.

From the 26th to the 28th an anticyclone developed to the west of Ireland and moved east across England, giving generally fine weather. However, this was succeeded by a trough of low pressure crossing Scotland on the 29th and 30th, and giving some rain.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

Warm but Wet.

1st to 6th Warm, dull and wet at first. Turning brighter on the 3rd and 4th and cooler by 6th.

7th to 10th Mild with some rain and showers confined mainly to some central and western areas.

11th to 14th Cloudier conditions gave rise to warm, wet weather with little or no sunshine. Some of the wettest days of the month occurred during this period.

15th to 21st Rather unsettled conditions with rain and showers mainly on the 16th, 18th and 19th. The 20th was a particularly sunny day.

22nd to 28th A warm and dry period throughout the Province with more prolonged spells of sunshine.

29th to 30th Milder with cloudier conditions. Widespread rain and showers effected most areas.

31st Summer ended very pleasantly with warm, dry and sunny conditions prevailing.

Last updated: 27 February 2013